

The Last Dog-Demon

by ArtisteFish

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Summary: The Dog-Demon Inuyasha had never questioned the existence of others like him, but when he learns that he may be the last of his kind, he sets out on a quest to find his missing kin. However, an unexpected transformation sets his quest on its head; now, with the help of new friends and an ardent admirer, he must find himself. AU, based on The Last Unicorn

The Last Dog-Demon

The Last Dog-Demon, Chapter 1

* * *

><p>"I dislike the feel of these woods."<p>

A young, black-haired boy looked up at the old man beside him, clutching a small bow in his hand and shouldering a quiver of arrows. "What's wrong, grandfather?"

Glancing about him with wary eyes, the elderly man carefully slung his own bow around his shoulders, leaving his hands weaponless. "Creatures who live in a dog-demon's forest learn a little magic of their own in time; they can be formidable opponents."

"Dog-demons?" His grandson mimicked in a disbelieving tone, "No one believes in those anymore, Grandfather. This is just a forest! Like any otherâ€¦ isn't it?"

The old man gave a humorless chuckle and looked down at the boy, his eyes bright with aged wisdom as he said "Then why do the leaves never fall here, or the snow? Why do no armies or travelers pass through here?" His gaze turned back to the thick trunks and undergrowth, the forest before them motionless and silent. The noon-day sun did not pierce the canopy beyond them, leaving the world beyond in deep

shadow. "I tell you m'boy, there is one dog-demon left, and so long as he makes this forest his home, we'll find no game to hunt."

"Grandfather, let's turn around" the young boy answered worriedly, seeing the forest before him with new eyes. "We can hunt somewhere else."

"Alright lad" the old man answered lightly, more than ready to put the place behind them. He stopped though as he started to turn away, his brow furrowing in thought, and then turned back and bowed low, his hands raised in prayer before him. Raising his head, he called out in a steady voice, bold yet respectful "Stay where you are, Great Dog-Demon; this is no world for you. Stay in your forest and keep your trees green, and your friends protected. I pray you good fortune" for you are the last." Straightening himself, he nodded towards the dark forest, then turned at the insistent tugging of his grandson on his hakama, and lead the way slowly back to the village.

Neither had noticed the other presence in the forest with them, watching with hard, yellow eyes surrounded by thick silver-white fur. A deep growl started up as the humans departed, the old man's parting words echoing in the young dog-demon's head.

'How can I be the last?' He thought angrily "had the old man not bowed and paid his respects, the dog would have bit off his head for such a foolish statement. For him to be the last" it was impossible! There had never been a time without dog-demons; they were as old as the sky, or the moon! They were fierce and powerful; they could not be killed or hunted unless they left their forest realms, and even then no human could match their strength. They had long since destroyed the countless demons who once plagued the land, and any who were left feared the great dogs more than anything.

The humans sought them for protection and luck in battle: an old adage said that if a man or woman rode upon the back of a dog-demon, no matter how cowardly or weak, they would become the bravest of warriors. But the humans had not sought him out for years" decades! He could not recall the last time a young warrior had been left in his woods, waiting surrounded by offerings for the dog-demon to approach and allow them to climb aboard his back. Had they really stopped believing?

Or" were there no longer any dog-demons to believe in?

Inuyasha shook his thick head of fur, pointed ears laid back as he fought foreign feelings of fear and worry stirring inside him. It didn't matter if he were the last dog-demon on earth; he was strong. He would be safe. His forest would thrive.

With a final angry woof he turned back into the dark trees, leaving behind the old man and his senile claims. His mood only soured though as he steadily realized there was one thing he could not shake, no matter how far or fast he ran from the place where those words had been spoken. Where before he'd known only contentment, now his very bones ached with a hollow, consuming feeling which could only be described as loneliness.

He didn't know what to do with such an emotion" and so he ran.

Inuyasha ran for miles, leaves whipping his face as the crisp forest air sped through his mane. His forest was expansive and crawled up the slopes of the mountains, allowing him the room he needed to really run the way a demon should. Focusing all his attention on the pounding of the mossy ground beneath his paws and the whistle of wind in his pointed ears, Inuyasha let the weight of that morning's disturbing revelation slip from his shoulders. What need was there for other dog-demons when he had such space to roam? Dog-demons didn't live together; they weren't social. At leastâ€¦ he didn't remember them being. With a vicious growl he surged forward, leaving behind the thought that perhaps he just couldn't remember a time when there had been others.

Seeing a patch of light in the distance, he made for it at break neck speed, bursting through the tree-line into open sunlight. With perfect control he came to a halt at the edge of a meadow, the vibrant grass and yellow wild-flowers tinged gold and glowing. Inuyasha's pounding heart calmed at the sight; this had always been his sanctuary, and here at least the feeling of being alone wasn't quite so suffocating.

Circling a particularly warm patch of grass, the great dog-demon fell to the ground, rolling onto his back and basking in the afternoon sun before curling up on his side and letting his eyes drift shut. He was on the verge of sleep, his limbs weighty and ears flickering, when a sudden stinging pinch at his neck had his eyes springing wide. Snarling, he lashed his massive jaws at the foreign irritant, and heard a startled squeak as something sprung out of reach.

"Please! Don't eat me!"

At the sound of a terrified, squeaking voice, Inuyasha quieted his growl. His sharp eyes caught a small speck of black against the white fur on his arm, and zeroed in on a tiny figure sitting cross-legged on the back of his paw, wiping sweat from his brow with one of four miniscule arms.

"Phew! That was a close one!" the figure said, the words coming from a needle-like beak instead of a mouth, "I'd heard dog-demons were vicious, but they say that a mere taste is more than worth the risk!"

Inuyasha's annoyance grew ten-fold. So, the little pest was a demon flea? Normal fleas knew better than to bother a dog-demonâ€¦ or at least, to bother him. "Alright, you've had your taste" Inuyasha growled out, his voice gravelly but similar to a human's "Now get outta my forest before I lose my good mood."

The little flea wrung his hands, glancing up nervously with large round eyes as he said in a wobbling voice "Well if this is a good mood I'd hate to see what a bad one looks like."

There was another high squeak and a vicious chomp as Inuyasha snapped his jaws at the demon, narrowly missing the flea as it sprung away. "Now wait a moment m'Lord! There's no need for hostility! I am but a humble flea, seeking sustenance after a long journey! I travel quite extensively you know, and nowhere have I found blood as exceedingly exquisite as yours, sire!"

The great dog merely raised a fluffy eyebrow at the flea's pandering, but the more he thought on what the pest had said, the stronger a question began to fester in his mind.

"You there â€" flea."

Pausing abruptly in the middle of his rambling, the old flea stopped and turned nervous eyes on the white dog-demon. "Y-yes m'Lord?"

Inuyasha set the flea with his harshest golden gaze. Emotions he hadn't felt in years were churning through him, but there was no need for the flea to know. If he could only intimidate the little nuisance, then perhaps he would get the answers to the questions that had plagued him all day. He hoped the creature would respond well to fear; subtlety was not his strength.

"You know who I am, don't you?"

The flea's wringing hands were mere blurs at this point, and his little mustache bobbed as he fought for the right words to keep himself alive. "Uhâ€¦ Iâ€¦ know that you rule this very beautiful forestâ€¦." He paused, swallowing nervously, and Inuyasha filled the gap in conversation with an impatient growl. He was not searching for flattery.

"Just tell me, you blood-sucking parasite: what am I?"

"W-why, you're a Dog-Demon! A great and powerful Dog-Demon! Though very young, it seems" his voice lost its nervous edge as he once again got caught up in his prattling flattering speech, "with a coat as white as I've ever seen, I must say, and such power! I bet the demons keep their distance! And might I just add, bearing the finest blood this old flea has ever had the pleasure of â€" "

"SHUT UP ALREADY!"

The old flea flew back a few yards at the unexpected roar, but quickly righted himself and sprung back to the irate demon, bowing profusely and spouting apologies. "Many pardons, your grace! I only meant to answer your question! I had no intention of upsetting your greatness!"

"Enough of that!" Inuyasha snapped, though with a touch more restraint than before. He had never had much control over his temper â€" he had always assumed it to be a trait of his warrior race. "Just answer me this, and then you can take your sniveling self from my forest: have you seen others like me?"

Surprise flitted over the small face of the demon, and in suspicious tones he spoke up "Well yes, butâ€¦ not for many long years, m'Lord."

Inuyasha waited with wide, expectant eyes, but as the flea offered up no further information he prodded "Well? Where are they? Where did you see them?"

There was no fear now in the tiny figure, but a look of such disbelief that the dog-demon was physically restraining himself from smashing the pest with his paw. After a moment the old man snapped

himself from his daze and said cautiously "You meanâ€¦ you don't know?"

Know? Know what? Inuyasha's mind whirled as the flea's innocent question created chaos inside him. What was he supposed to know? Hadâ€¦ had they all gone somewhere? Had they left their lands for a place where the humans wouldn't bother them? Were they waiting for him to join them? â€¦ Had they left him behind?

So many questions fought for dominance in his head, but his pride kept him from voicing a single one. The flea seemed to understand his predicament though, and in a small, respectful voice said "They were rounded up, many years ago. A great red spider swept through the lands and trapped them all in its webs. It carried them away on its back and left no prints to follow. Iâ€¦ I just assumed you'd escaped."

He had escapedâ€¦ he'd escaped through ignorance. Anger rippled through him like a storm; fury like he'd never known burned in his veins. A demon had carried off his kin like a sack of potatoesâ€¦ and he'd been here, in his forest, running free in blissful naivety. Even the humans had known more than him.

"Where are they now?" His yellow eyes burned bronze, and the old flea paled at the sight of his bared fangs. "Where were they taken, demon? Answer me, or I will kill you."

"That's all I know, I swear to you!" the flea cried pathetically, panic evident on every centimeter of his face, "I'm a coward, sire! I was nowhere near these events when they happened! I've told you all I know, all that I've heard â€" you must believe me!"

Inuyasha grimaced at the pitiful display. He had no patience with cowardice, but he had pride enough not to harm a defenseless insect. Rolling his amber eyes and rising from his spot in the grass, the dog-demon turned away from the flea, still caught up in his groveling, and with a powerful kick sent the tiny demon skyward.

Without glancing back he slipped under the canopy cover, the need for an afternoon nap gone as fiery determination filled his every fiber. The othersâ€¦ were captured? Trapped? It didn't sound possible of dog-demons. Who would be strong enough â€" bold enough â€" to even attempt such a feat? Most demons would sooner die than be captured, butâ€¦ what other explanation could there be?

Inuyasha shook himself, glancing about the forest, seeing through the trunks and the boughs to the animals under his protection. They were safe, and strong â€" being in his proximity for so long, they'd gained courage and power. If he leftâ€¦ they would surely be alright. He surveyed the trees as he passed, his gait slowed with thought; the forest might start to die without the influence of his aura, but that was the natural way of things. Forests died, and were reborn. Demons did not come back as easily as forests.

The great dog walked and walked for hours; for all his awareness, it could have been days. His thoughts consumed him, and he hadn't realized he'd had a destination in mind until he reached the very edge of the forest, where the trees met fields and roads. He paused, the barrenness of the country before him eating away at his resolve.

The forest would survive without himâ€¦ but would he survive without the forest? Looking back over his shoulder, Inuyasha saw the shining eyes of the forest creatures, watching as their protector stepped beyond the boundaries of his home.

Tearing his eyes away, Inuyasha took one step, and then another, and before another thought could enter his mind, he broke into a run. Hard, lifeless dirt met his paws as he thundered away, and he could feel the tendrils of magic breaking as he left the only dwelling he had ever known. He wouldn't regret it though; dog-demons didn't know regret. He had a duty to find out what had happened to the others. If they were truly all gone, if he was really the last dog-demonâ€¦ he would go wherever they were, even to his death. His place was with them.

Of all the things he had learned that day, this truth was hardest to take, but also the toughest to ignore: dogs weren't meant to be alone.

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><p>* Author's Note:<p>

yes... I've started another au.

This one won't take as long as the others, since it's based on an already finished story, meaning I know how it plays out and how to pace it. That being said, for those who are familiar with the book and/or movie "The Last Unicorn", I'm going to be making some changes. One big one is that it's set in Ancient-ish Japan (some indeterminate year) instead of old medieval England or Europe. Also, since dog-demons are not as demure and peaceful as unicorns, changes have been made so that the lore better fits the fierce demons. Accordingly, several other roles have been adjusted to fit that lore. However, the characters will still fit into their crossover roles, and hopefully will remain in-character at the same time. :P Wish me luck! And honestly, even if they don't, I'm not super worried. This au is mainly just fun for me because The Last Unicorn is one of my favorite books/movies; if other people enjoy this au as well, even better. So please, if you're interested, follow and see where this goes! And yes, no worries: there will be plenty of InuKag (a little later though) as well as some budding MirSan. Just be patient - it's a good story. :3

End
file.